

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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P 071428Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1195

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, UY

SUBJ: AMENDMENT AGAINST MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO URUGUAY

REF: STATE 109861

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT THE HOUSE FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE BASED ITS FAVORABLE VOTE ON THE KOCH AMENDMENT ON ITS (THE SUB-COMMITTEE'S) PERCEPTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN URUGUAY. WE BELIEVE THE ACTION TO HAVE BEEN ILL-FOUNDED, FIRST BECAUSE OF A FALSE IMPRESSION AS TO THE URUGUAYAN SITUATION AND SECOND BECAUSE SUCH A MEASURE, IF ENACTED, WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT OTHER US INTERESTS WITHOUT CHANGING THE SITUATION IT IS INTENDED TO CORRECT. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT ENSURE THAT THE COMMITTEE RECEIVE A PORTRAYAL OF THE SITUATION AS REPORTED IN DEPTH BY THE EMBASSY AND THAT THE APPROACH USED BEFORE A SENATE COMMITTEE BY JAMES WILSON LAST DECEMBER BE REITERATED. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THIS EMBASSY HAS PERSISTENTLY SOUGHT TO INFLUENCE THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HERE BY DIRECT, PRIVATE REPRESENTATIONS TO KEY OFFICIALS. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT THE FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE OF HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS VOTED TO CUT OFF ALL
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MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND CREDIT SALES TO URUGUAY FOR FY 77

ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS. WE BELIEVE THE SUB-COMMITTEE DECISION TO HAVE BEEN ILL-FOUNDED ON TWO GROUNDS, 1) THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN URUGUAY AND, 2) THE FACT THAT SUCH A MEASURE, IF ENACTED, WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OTHER US INTERESTS WITHOUT HAVING AN OFFSETTING POSITIVE IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

3. WE HAVE REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN URUGUAY. MVD 1343 (COMMENTS ON SUPPLEMENTARY ICJ REPORT ON URUGUAY) IS THE LATEST IN THIS LONG SERIES OF DETAILED REPORTS. WE DO NOT HAVE THE LANGUAGE OF THE KOCH AMENDMENT, BUT ASSUME IT REFLECTS THE VIEW OF SOME SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT THERE IS HERE "A CONSISTENT PATTERN OF GROSS VIOLATIONS OF UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS". WE REALIZE THIS LANGUAGE IS OPEN TO INTERPRETATION BUT OUR VIEW, BASED ON DIRECT KNOWLEDGE AND OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS IS THAT IT DOES NOT DESCRIBE THE SITUATION IN URUGUAY TODAY.

4. THE INFLUENCE OF THE ARMED FORCES IN THE GOU HAS BEEN REPORTED FREQUENTLY AS HAS OUR BELIEF THAT NEITHER THAT INFLUENCE NOR SOME OBJECTIONABLE PRACTICES CAN BE CHANGED BY OUR CUTTING ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO APPLY PRESSURE. BILATERAL DIPLOMACY REMAINS THE BASIC WEAPON. AS THE DEPARTMENT TOLD A SENATE COMMITTEE, WE MUST MAINTAIN CONTACT AND INFLUENCE AND YET TRY TO PERSUADE GOVERNMENTS WHO FEEL STRONGLY BESIEGED THAT THEY ARE FOLLOWING WRONG AND SELF-DEFEATING POLICIES IF THEY VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS WHILE TRYING TO ACHIEVE THE SECURITY THEY LONG FOR.

4. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT DO WHAT IT CAN TO PORTRAY TO THE COMMITTEE THE SITUATION IN URUGUAY AS WE HAVE OBJECTIVELY REPORTED IT AND REITERATE THE APPROACH MADE BY JAMES WILSON TO THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE LAST DECEMBER. SIRACUSA

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